

**Planning Advisory Committee**

Thursday, November 2, 2017 – 9:30 a.m.

PRMD Hearing Room, 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa

**Special meeting to discuss  
wildfire recovery and renewal**

**ITEM**

1. Introductions
2. Oct 26, 2017 meeting minutes
3. Funding and finance issues DISCUSSION/ACTION
  - 3.1. FEMA, CalOES
  - 3.2. MTC/ABAG
  - 3.3. Insurance
  - 3.4. Fees/ Fee waivers
  - 3.5. Other
4. Identifying immediate needs for temporary, small scale housing - DISCUSSION/ACTION
  - 4.1. Additional staffing
  - 4.2. Options for immediate housing for residents and construction workers – trailers, camps with limited lifetime
  - 4.3. Options for ADUs, converted spaces, other, that may become permanent
  - 4.4. CEQA streamlining for entire county
  - 4.5. Utility hookups
5. Community development master planning – 3 years out, 10 years out --DISCUSSION/ACTION
  - 5.1. Professional and community group involvement
  - 5.2. CEQA
  - 5.3. Models from other communities
  - 5.4. Provisions for affordability
6. Countywide action needed - DISCUSSION/ACTION
  - 6.1. Urgency ordinances in all cities
  - 6.2. Process for financial incentives in non-burn areas
7. Data collection and management- DISCUSSION/ACTION
8. Resilience planning, identifying and addressing vulnerabilities-- DISCUSSION/ACTION
9. Adjourn

Next meeting – Thursday, November 9?

**PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES**

*Special meeting to discuss wildfire recovery and rebuilding*

**Meeting Notes of October 26, 2017**

**ITEM**

**1. Introductions**

Meeting called to order at 9:15 a.m. by Janet Spilman and Suzanne Smith.

Jenny Berg, MTC; Sue Castellucci, City of Petaluma; Gillian Hayes, Graton Rancheria; Jessica Jones, City of Santa Rosa; Jeffrey Beisweiger, City of Rohnert Park; Ken McNab, Town of Windsor; Clare Hartman, City of Santa Rosa; David Guhin, City of Santa Rosa; David Goodison, City of Sonoma; Matt Gilster, Permit Sonoma; Amy Lyle, Permit Sonoma; Rusty Klassen; Geof Syphers, Sonoma Clean Power; Jennifer Barrett, Permit Sonoma; Maya DeRosa, City of Healdsburg; Tennis Wick, Permit Sonoma; Alix Bockelman, MTC/ABAG; Ken Kirkey, MTC/ABAG; Ada Chan, MTC/ABAG; Dana Brechwald, MTC/ABAG; Leah Zippert, MTC/ABAG; Michael Germeraad, MTC/ABAG; Kenyon Webster, City of Sebastopol.

Staff: Suzanne Smith; Janet Spilman; Lauren Casey; Chris Barney; Dana Turrey; Drew Nichols; Carolyn Glanton; Julian Ruzzier-Gaul (CivicSpark Fellow).

**2. Status of the communities directly impacted by the fires – identify immediate needs and resources**

Tennis Wick, Permit Sonoma, provided a descriptive overview of the Sonoma County fires to the committee. 10% of the county has burned, and once the damage assessment is complete, roughly 10,000 families will have been disrupted. Sonoma County Permit Resource and Management Department is now focused on response, recovery, and rebuilding. In this focus, Mr. Wick mentioned

six housing sites have already been approved for rebuilding in the burn zone, which are now awaiting clearance of hazardous materials.

The big request to the jurisdictions in Sonoma County is to consider the legislation, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors on October 24<sup>th</sup> (Agenda Item 41), which, to name a few, prohibits rental housing price gouging, restricts issuing permits for new vacation rentals, allows residential use of recreational and travel trailers on properties, waives impact fees for new accessory dwelling units and junior accessory units, and allows safe parking programs at county-owned properties. It is important for everyone, county-wide, to contribute working towards solving the housing challenge currently faced in Sonoma County. The County has been speeding up housing projects currently in pipeline and urged to advocate for solutions, such as emergency declarations by city councils; this is county wide crisis.

David Guhin, City of Santa Rosa, described the situation in the City of Santa Rosa. Over 3,000 homes have been lost, 25 commercial structures, and four hotels. The tourism economy is being closely watched, with the loss of the TOT tax, as well as property taxes. The city council recently acted on policy measures and temporary housing. Many ideas are being suggested and staff is working on the feasibility of these ideas, from short term solutions to get people into temporary homes to long term housing solutions. The creation of a separate fire response department is entertained. Although 5% of the city is destroyed,

there is still 95% of the city that needs to be run, so trying to find that balance is being worked on.

The biggest fear is a mass exodus from the city. One in six doctors, for example, have lost their home, as well as teachers and engineers, and staff working on figuring out how to keep people in the city. Questions continuously asked are: how do we build alternative housing, how do we build the housing stock, and how can we fast track housing projects to keep the people in the city?

Mr. Wick added CalOES and FEMA will be hosting meetings to figure out solutions and mentioned these solutions may be identified in other jurisdictions.

Suzanne Smith, Sonoma County Transportation Authority, asked to speak more on temporary housing efforts.

Mr. Wick said the North Coast Builders Exchange have been communicated with and efforts are under way to coordinate contractors. The wildfires happened at the worst time of the year, with the winter season and holidays in the near future. There is a significant awareness to retain individuals; otherwise they will leave the community. For example, West County has a significant number of camps which are closed for the winter seasons. Contact to faith-based organizations have been made to open up the camps so there are places for the people in the community.

Geof Syphers, CEO Sonoma Clean Power, inquired about the current streamlining status of CEQA in the burn areas, as well as potential areas outside the area.

Mr. Wick responded the Emergency Declaration from the governor grants CEQA exemptions for replacement housing. Sonoma County as a whole

needs CEQA relief: the solution is not necessarily directly in the burn zone, it is also outside the burn zone.

Mr. Syphers further asked how can community leaders help communicate, and how to make the argument, to the State.

Jennifer Barrett, Permit Sonoma, suggested communicating this need to the governor, and to other departments at the state level.

Ms. Barrett noted that many of the sites offered/identified are not in the correct zone and the County is exploring ways to work around the rezoning process. The use of the Urgency Ordinance is the reoccurring topic being explored.

Additionally, of the sites which have been found, in Larkfield and in the Airport area for example, there are physical challenges such as the lack of water and sewer hook ups. Even if CEQA is not there, these physical barriers exist.

Mr. Wick urged the committee to think big, creative, to put constraints aside; and shared stories and examples of staff thinking big during the evacuation periods.

Kenyon Webster, City of Sebastopol, wondered what would need to be done if cities outside the burn area had a site available. Who would be developing/paying private property, etc.?

Mr. Wick responded there is not a concrete answer yet. FEMA and CalOES are working to develop those details, yet said it depends with whom the County will be working – whether it is with private property owners or not.

Jennifer Barrett mentioned a list of potential sites have been identified: some are in the city limits, and others are outside the city limits. If you have a site, send it to Permit Sonoma. The City of Santa

Rosa City Council is exploring ways to help with the FEMA reimbursement process, noting there are still no answers to these various questions.

Mr. Wick announced the lead contacts for the City of Santa Rosa and the County are Tennis Wick and David Guhin.

Rusty Klassen, consultant to Sonoma Clean Power, asked about the areas which have sewer and water lines, if the county and city capable for electric hook ups. It was answered that PG&E is working to develop these options.

Clare Harman, City of Santa Rosa, expressed the interest and emphasis to find temporary housing to keep people in the city, there also needs to be attention towards a solid exit plan.

Mr. Syphers asked, in relation to advocating to the State, what language to use for CEQA exemption for those who can use it.

Ms. Barrett responded: statutory, exemption, and within and outside cities in Sonoma County.

Lauren Casey, Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Agency, asked about the process for large sites, and if there are expedited processes/initiative for ADUs.

Mr. Wick responded that expedited process for ADUs were already in place. However, today the Board of Supervisors were debating the fee waiver, but not fully sure regarding insurance claims and to whom will these waivers be granted, either these fee waivers are for the home owner or for the insurance company. And to what extent will FEMA cover? This debate and question was seen in the Valley Fire in Lake County and answers to these questions are being determined this day, or within the next day.

Mr. Klassen follow up on this topic and starting thinking about modular/temporary units and if these can be picked up from the temporary site and moved into a permanent site, assuming it meets all building codes? Mr. Wick responded that all manners of modular housing available, but want to avoid the use of trailer zones that was see post-Hurricane Katrina.

Ms. Smith highlighted the interesting communication modes for the victims of the fires, specifically in suggesting a modular temporary home, asking who the lead is, how these options will be communicated to the victims of the fires. Mr. Wick responded the focus is on those, if it is possible, who can build on their property. There are also individuals who are dealing with insurance claims, and fearing bankruptcy by living in hotel rooms or switching between family and friend's couches.

There is significant uncertainty for temporary housing due to the lack of a rental market in Sonoma County.

Maya DeRosa, City of Healdsburg, mentioned an urgency ordinance addressing ADUs will be presented to the Healdsburg City Council on November 6<sup>th</sup>. One change with the urgency ordinance will to waive parking requirement when converting garages into a living space. As well, there is exploration to a model that Santa Cruz uses, whereas floor plans are already drawn and can be selected. It was suggested that to seek an architect who would be willing to draw up streamlined plans.

Ms. Barrett acknowledged the model suggested, saying they County has been exploring that idea, and there has been a group of individuals who have expressed interest.

The idea of exploring a case management system to assist fire victims and to have an ombudsman for these victims was mentioned; as well as, having an overall task assignment for each jurisdiction to prevent duplication of efforts, clear communication of information, and to identify the key objectives to pursue.

A conversation around septic rules continued. If an individual with an existing, conforming septic system, the County will not be reviewing temporary plans within the burn zone. The County and City of Santa Rosa will reduce the parking standard for ADUs/micro-units. Another list of measures/ideas, including micro units, for example, are considered for another urgency ordinance; however these are currently still being brainstormed. The unincorporated areas are limited to development due to sewer line connections. Of the unincorporated areas, the largest areas outside the city limits are the Airport area, Sonoma Valley/Boyes Hot Springs, and Larkfield. Additional communities were named.

Ms. Barrett said as the desire to rebuilding moves forward, there should be a consideration for EV and solar technology for the junior- and secondary units at the burn sites. Questions being asked, since insurance companies will not necessarily pay for these is how will this be funded, and how to leverage it.

Mr. Syphers added studies are being conducted to see whether Zero Net Energy technology is feasible in Sonoma County. The results should be available soon and until data is available, applying for funds will not be as easy.

Alix Bockelman, MTC/ABAG, added that the finance authority in the process of being set up and is regarded as a good conduit to assist with opportunities available in Sonoma County.

Examples were provided to show how finance authority has assisted communities.

Jenny Berg, MTC/ABAG/BayREN, said that BayREN has an existing funding scheme to help multi-family properties.

Mr. Wick added the biggest constraint currently faced by home owners and insurance groups is the cost of construction. Steps are in the works to amend the building code to alleviate these constraints.

The conversation shifted to the financing of rebuilding homes, the fees associated with construction, and developing a master planning of efforts. There should be plans for those who wish to rebuilding, as well, there needs to be a plan for those who wish to sell their property.

Insurance payouts average between \$15,000 and \$25,000 to fire victims.

Ms. Barrett said a way to help fund the additional construction is to waive the impact fees in the burn areas. The Sonoma County Water Agency has agreed to defer connection fees within the burn areas.

The committee discussed financing, the needs to be creative in financing opportunities, and redevelopment plans and challenges, both pre- and post-fire.

Ms. Bockelman added the near term goal is have the fire victims housed. MTC/ABAG are available, are listening to what is needed, and is poised to help in the far term. There is a sensitivity to understand what the community needs and assumptions are not made to develop solutions. MTC/ABAG is listening to the needs of the community.

Ada Chan, ABAG, noted an example from the City of Pittsburg where ADUs were included in their inclusionary ordinance. Due to this success, developers are continuing to including ADUs in single family units.

Suzanne Smith, noting the conversation around deferred and adjusted fees, wondered if now is a good time to ask the legislature to raise the sales tax cap.

Ms. Barrett responded this gives the jurisdictions a tool to install the infrastructure, but there are still redevelopment funds available.

Mr. Syphers asked whether county wide data collection is in process, so that a data source is available and can help track funding requests.

This also gives an opportunity for the City and County to consider other areas for development, such as along the SMART corridor. Solely focusing the on the burn areas will miss other key areas in the county to rebuild and attention should be paid to overall thinking.

The committee also wondered how the housing package (SB-2) can be of assistance, whether there are ways to work with the State of California in receiving assistance through this legislation. Although these may not be within the burn zones, PDAs could receive these funds for more housing opportunities.

Furthermore, a subsidy is needed to remove the land cost barrier, which will stimulate growth and redevelopment. Before the fire, housing would be stalled – due to the cost of construction and land – and was not making it workable.

The conversation switched between community developments and funding for mobile home parks. Noting temporary (mobile home) housing can be regenerated into something permanent since

utilities will have been established. There are sites available now, however receiving the funds for the acquisition of these sites is the challenge.

Ken Kirkey, MTC/ABAG, followed up on the previous comment and extended the thought on housing construction workers during the rebuilding process.

Ms. Barrett responded that there is an allowance for trailers/recreational vehicles on properties, where the primary owner will have multiple trailers for the contractor to work out of; however, funding the connections are still uncertain. Money needs to be available first in order for FEMA to reimburse and the County is working towards finding that solution.

Additionally, it is uncertain if there will be an allowance to build temporary housing for construction workers, since that was not be directly affected by the fire. Funding the areas and individuals not affected by the fire is another challenge.

The rebuilding could be an opportunity to meet the County's RHNA numbers, because if there is a focus outside the burn areas through rapid rehousing and interim solutions, 3,000 units could be created to rehouse, and then will rebuild with higher density. This can be seen as a clean slate and opportunity to meet the housing numbers because the facilitation to make things happen quickly. There is also an interest to see how to overcome this challenge in three, five years in the future.

Mr. Kirkey spoke on the CASA effort by MTC and ABAG that is tasked with the regions housing crisis.

Ms. Barrett commented on affordable housing. When individuals start to rebuild, brand new units will be built. The existing housing that was lost to

the fires was older, but affordable. There is a concern how to ensure that the housing stock that will be rebuilt will include enough affordable units. The community want to rebuild, but there is a want for affordable units, especially if subsidy redevelopment, etc. will be used to build the community wanted.

Mr. Syphers asked if any assessments of property values of lost sites have been made – estimates which could demonstrate how much that is relatively affordable which has been lost. This could give a perspective of the property values and the usefulness of this information for the jurisdictions.

Mr. Kirkey responded GIS staff has been tasked with mapping the demographics of the burned zones, but can add the property values to this assessment.

Ms. Barrett also noted that some property owners had been renting out a room to another individuals who may or may not have renters insurance, therefore the number of those who have lost housing is higher than the community actually thinks.

Ms. Bockelman asked how can MTC/ABAG help and suggested what can help for identifying the next steps.

Mr. Webster added the remaining of the jurisdictions in Sonoma County should have urgency ordinances, following the City of Santa Rosa and the County of Sonoma.

- 3.** Stages of recovery – near terms, long term – identify immediate needs and resources

Discussed under Item 2.

- 4.** Impacts of population and housing shifts, locally and in the region. Impacts on funding formulas, RHNA, etc.

Discussed under Item 2.

- 5.** Resilience planning, identifying and addressing vulnerabilities

Discussed under Item 2.

- 6.** Adjourn

The committee adjourned at 10:55a.m. and suggested to meet again on November 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9:30am.